

ON THE TRAIL OF THE MOTION PICTURE

William Farnum and the "Kitchen Policemen"

By Harriette Underhill

Mean means when the soldiers eat. It also means what you get into when you promise to go out to No Man's Land and interview William Farnum. At least, that is the way it looked to me on the morning of the great event.

Of course, time has softened our impressions, and, viewed in retrospect, it was quite a pleasant day. Some of it was even pleasant at the time, but the first part was quite unpleasant.

Some people will not appreciate our feelings when we say that we had promised to be ready to start for No Man's Land at 10 o'clock, but, for us, it had quite the sensation of going on a picnic at sunrise.

For some strange reason our evening never really begins until after midnight and all of our truly brilliant things are written between 12 and 4 a. m. So, after finishing up George Walsh at 4:30, we had to arise at 8:30 to be ready to pursue William Farnum at 10 o'clock.

We did it, but not buoyantly, and then at 10:15 some one telephoned and said that the car had sprung a leak and had to have a new tire. At 11 o'clock we started, going via Fort Lee and only stopping to pick up a new man who carried a camera and was going to "do" Bill Farnum, too.

At Fort Lee the 1908 Reo in which we were bounding along sprang another leak. So we stopped at Mr. Fox's studio and got a great Packard with all new tires on it and started at fifty miles an hour for No Man's Land.

After we had been riding for about half an hour the nice man suddenly remembered that he had left his camera, a \$100 affair, in the old car. So we all went back, frozen to death, and got the camera and started out again. And then when we discovered that we had lost our hat (the big black one that Olga Petrova gave us) we were glad that we hadn't acted the way we felt when the nice man left his camera in the Reo.

We turned around again and found the hat lying beside the road where it had leaked out of the car when we weren't looking, and then we really started for No Man's Land.

This particular No Man's Land is in Harrington Park and that's all we know about it. Mr. Farnum is making a war picture and he has trenches and shattered trees and everything to make it look like the real article.

It was all very interesting, but it didn't have a chance to be noticed by us, for as we drew up in front of No Man's Land there, in front of us, was a fat iron thing on the ground and underneath a fire was burning. On top of it were frying pans, and in them were things which sizzled and sent out wonderful odors.

A beautiful young man with pink cheeks was taking a roast out of the fire, and after we tasted his bread and his coffee and his creamed peas we asked him if he was married. He blushed and said "No," and that he hadn't learned how to cook at home. Just think, he has only known how for three months! And then there were a lot more handsome persons called "kitchen policemen" who waited on us at the table—plank, rather—and filled up your tin mug with coffee every time it got empty.

Mr. Farnum sat next to us and showed us how to drink so that some of the coffee went down your throat instead of down the neck of your blouse. It is rather difficult at first, because the tin mugs have handles that look like curb bits and are curved, for some reason not perceptible to the lay mind.

At the plank with us were Frank Lloyd and Scott Dunlap, the nice man with the camera, and two wonderful looking officers who were terribly stern and terribly jolly with us. They were Captain James Proctor Egan and Lieutenant H. F. Haynes, of the 1st Field Artillery. They wore overcoats with scroley braid on the cuffs and hats with leather straps under their chins. Very becoming!

And after lunch—mess—we all went over to No Man's Land. It was hard walking, and William Fox owes us one black satin sport skirt, one pair of pumps, one glove and nearly one head, for a machine gun went off while we

were in front of it, only the gunner wasn't a straight shot, or he didn't have it focussed right, or something. We saw him turning the crank, but, of course, a machine gun looks just like a movie camera.

Mr. Farnum wore a uniform all covered with mud and both knees were sticking out, and they were very dirty. He had a horrible, week-old beard painted on with gray paint, and while we watched he set up a mirror on a blasted stump and painted a nasty gash on his forehead, with blood running all down his neck.

Then he took a wounded comrade on his back and started to crawl across No Man's Land, with three people turning cranks on him, only this time they were cameras and not machine guns.

And finally he got safely through the barbed wire and the New York Guards rushed out of the trenches and rescued him, and everybody breathed once more.

And then a strapping person in khaki, who proved to be one of Uncle Sam's chauffeurs, called out, "Who wants to go back to New York?" And Captain Egan, Lieutenant Haynes, Scott Dunlap and we volunteered.

So we flew back to New York in a khaki-colored car, and we sat next to the handsome lieutenant, and learned all about India, the Boer War, the Philippines and every other war we have had lately. It must seem funny for Lieutenant Haynes to be playing at movie war when he has done nothing but fight since he was fifteen years old.

Oh, we forgot to say that Captain Egan looks just like General Pershing, and he is going to impersonate him in the new picture, only we don't know the name of the picture.

And after we got back to New York we remembered that we hadn't had any interview with William Farnum. All we talked about at lunch—mess—was steak and coffee and peas and being hungry, and after he crawled away into No Man's Land we couldn't get near enough to him without getting in the picture, and we didn't care to make our debut that way.

A Letter From Somewhere in France

Herbert Howe, who used to be the most popular press agent in town, contributes the following:

Hell, Heaven or Hoboken by Christ-mas!

FRANCE, Oct. 15.

Dear Lady Hyperbole: Languishing here in a hospital, my thoughts incline naturally to the sin centre, so different from this tank centre.

So pause a moment in your tea scintillations at the Biltmore, sacrifice one cup of tea at the Ritz, or one muffin at the Astor, and dash off one of your Rabelaisian notes in the writing room. As I write a gentleman is reciting the 23d Psalm near the stove. Close by another group is shooting scraps with equal fervor; and next to me a brave comrade complains bitterly of cold feet, but never metaphorically. I myself am suffering from too much France, which I should describe as a portion of the world two-thirds water and one-third mud. They say we are to have peace, and I am not one of those dissatisfied Alexanders always complaining for new worlds to conquer.

Indeed, I should be willing to confine my future campaigns to that world of which the Brevoort is the capital and the Black Cat the mascot. Also, in the dear days beyond recall, wasn't there a Purple Pup and a Vermillion Hound?

No previous experience counts over here, for tanking in No Man's Land is so different. One must be a mechanic, and you know the only mechanical device with which I was expert was the corkscrew.

As for the "fillum" part of the war, of which your pen panegyrics, I'll say that most of the pictures I've seen are of a vintage more suitable for the Claridge grill than for the Rivoli Theatre. Louise Glaum in devil gown adorned the billboards of the seaport where we landed. Her "Wolf Woman" was being shown at the Cinema. The first picture I saw at the Y. M. C. A. was one of those early period affairs of Western barrooms. In it were Louise, Charlie Ray and Bill Hart—blissed trinity of stardom. It was called "The Convert," and Charlie converted, Bill was converted and Louise converted.

The movies constitute the only orgies we enjoy. To me they are the next best thing to a furlough home. Such is the advantage of being a member of the film family, and now my pen is growing as dry as New York after 1 a. m., and a Broadway Knight longs for a Broadway night. Regards to everybody who wants them, Yours,

HERB.

Co. C, 829 Bat., Tank Corps, 302 Tank Centre, A. P. O. 714, A. E. F., France.

New Griffith Film

In the Making

D. W. Griffith's next film production to be released as an Aftersight picture is titled "The Greatest Thing in Life," and is directed by the famous producer himself. The story, by Captain Victor Marier, centres chiefly around a young American who is the social harvest of pampering circumstances, plunges into the war and emerges a new man. In the cast are Lillian Gish, Elmo Lincoln, Adolphe Lestina, David Butler, Edward Foll, Kate Bruce and "Peaches" Jackson.



Dorothy Bernard and Isabel Lamon as Jo and Meg in "Little Women" Strand



William Farnum

New Films at the Theatres This Week

"A Romance of the Air," with Lieutenant Bert Hall, of the Lafayette Escadrille, and Edith Day, the popular prima donna, in the leading roles, will be the featured attraction at the Rivoli this week. The story is based on Lieutenant Hall's new book, "En l'Air" ("In the Air"), and deals with Hall's thrilling experiences behind the German lines.

Tschakowsky's stirring "Solennelle," or "1812," as it is more popularly called, will be played as the overture by the orchestra. Erno Rapee conducting. Greek Evans will sing "A Son of the Desert Am I," by Phillips, before a characteristic Wenger setting. Gladys Rice, soprano, will contribute a solo.

The Creel War Review, in addition to the Animated Pictorial, will occupy an important place on the programme. A scenic feature, "Birds of the Woodland Rocks and Marshes," and a Harold Lloyd comedy called "Take a Chance" will complete the pictorial portion of the bill.

The featured films at Loew's New York Theatre and Roof scheduled for the coming week will include "Pals First," with Harold Lockwood, on Monday; Constance Talmadge in "Mrs. Leffingwell's Boots," and the Second United States government official war film "America's Answer" on Tuesday; Marion Davies in "The Burden of Proof" on Wednesday; Constance Talmadge in "Good Night, Paul," on Thursday; Vivian Martin in "Her Country First," and Norma Talmadge in "De Luxe Annie" on Friday; Barbara Castle in "Just Sylvia" on Saturday and Emmy Wehlen in "His Bonded Wife" on Sunday.



May Boland at the Rialto

Mary Boland will make her screen debut at the Rialto this week in "A Woman's Experience," founded on Paul M. Potter's play "Agnes." The story deals with the experiences of a young country couple when they are thrust into the social world of New York's fashionable set. Mary Boland is supported by Sam Hardy, now playing in "Canary."

The Rialto Orchestra, under the leadership of Hugo Riesenfeld, will play "Vysshard," one of Bedrich Smetana's symphonic poems, as the principal music number. The interlude selection will be several movements from Luigi's "Egyptian Ballet." Vincenzo Ballester, barytone, will sing an aria from "Hamlet" by Thomas.

The Creel War Review, in addition to the Animated Pictorial, a scenic feature, "Samatra," scenes in the Malay Archipelago, and a Sunshine Comedy called "Mongrels," will complete the pictorial programme.

The Strand Theatre will present, for the first time on any screen, William A. Brady's pictorialization of "Little Women," Louisa M. Alcott's immortal story. The four "Little Women"—Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy—are portrayed respectively by Isabel Lamon, Dorothy Bernard, Lillian Hall and Florence Flinn. Henry Hull is John Brooke and Conrad Nagel plays Laurie. The production was made under the direction of Harley Knowles. "Scrambles in the Alps" is the title of a new and beautiful Burlington Travel Scenic.



Shadows on the Screen

Singing ushers are the latest made-in-America innovation. First there appeared at the Strand a girl usher with such a beautiful voice that she is crowded with engagements now and doesn't have to use any more.

And now along comes Christy Hagedorn. He is the handsome usher at the Rialto or the Rivoli, and every time you look at him you think "Why couldn't he have been a girl?" Only, then, Ziegfeld would have had him on the Roof, for he sings an' everything.

He confided to us last Sunday between the shows at the Rialto that his ambition was to appear behind the footlights instead of in front of them. He asked us to intercede for him with S. L. R., and gave as reference Dr. Young, Unit 29, at Thirty-seventh Street and Seventh Avenue. That is where Christy has been singing all summer for the benefit of Uncle Sam's boys.

The next picture which Mabel Normand will make for Goldwyn will be a screen version of "Sis Hopkins." The Goldwyn people have just acquired the motion picture rights to his famous Hoosier play from Rose Melville, who wrote and created and played the part for nearly a quarter of a century.

No play on the American stage has a more curious history than "Sis Hopkins." In the provinces it was for twenty years as well known and popular as "Rip Van Winkle," "Way Down East" or "In Old Kentucky." Four persons have made fortunes out of it and retired. Rose Melville and her husband, Frank Minzey, toured America with it year after year for nearly a quarter of a century. In both large and small towns all over the country many people would go to see Rose Melville in "Sis Hopkins" regularly once a year. Out of the proceeds the Minzeys have left the stage and acquired a large estate on the shores of Lake George.

William Fox announces a release, within a short time, of nine productions. They are: "Under Two Flags," "The Sergeant," "The Darling of Paris," "Fighting Blood," "The Broken Vow," "The New Governor," R. A. Walsh's "Regeneration," "The Soul of Broadway" and "Infidelity," based on George Ohnet's novel, "Dr. Rameau."

These productions have been re-edited, retitled and revised. They present in minor roles more of the famous stars of to-day than now are seen in a year's average.

Scenario editors are due to receive some bumps and scientific advice from a group of special spectators who will hereafter attend attractions at the Broadway Theatre. These critics are members of the class in scenario composition at Columbia University.

Negotiations were closed yesterday afternoon between Evangeline Booth, representing the Salvation Army, and Jesse L. Lasky, vice-president of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation in charge of production, for the filming of a big motion picture telling the story of the Salvation Army both in war and peace.

Ida Darling, well known stage and screen player, has been engaged by Metro for the important part of the German spy in its all-star screen version of "The Man Who Stayed at Home," in which King Baggot is seen in the leading role.

"Everybody's Girl," a Blue Ribbon feature starring Alice Joyce, will be the Vitaphone release for the week of November 18. It is an adaptation from an O. Henry story, "Brick Dust Row," and was directed by Tom Terriss.

The resumption of releases by World Pictures will be made on November 18, on which day this company will present "Just Sylvia," with Barbara Castleton starring, and Johnnie Hines featured.

Clara Kimball Young's next picture for Select will be "Cheating Cheaters." Florence Earl, who was signed last week by the Antipodes Film Corporation of Australia as character woman, ran across a stumbling block on Saturday when she learned that she could not obtain copies of her birth certificate from San Francisco, said documents and records having been destroyed in the earthquake and fire years ago. As the versatile creator of Mme. Matropia in "Very Good Eddie" must show documentary evidence of her origin before the State Department will issue a passport, she has been keeping the wires hot day and night since between here and Frisco in an endeavor to locate relatives who were present on her natal day.

Director John S. Lopez completed last Saturday at the Keeney studios, on East Forty-eighth Street, a six-reel feature for B. S. Moss, which is still untitled pending a name that will do justice to it.

Beth Ivins is the new leading lady who is described as knowing how to wear gowns and, what is almost as important, to act.

Doris Kenyon, who has just completed her latest picture, "Wild Honey," is impatiently awaiting the lifting of the influenza ban to start work on another production. The moment the ban is lifted Miss Kenyon and her company will leave for Hendersonville, N. C., where exteriors will be made on "Twilight," which will be her next feature.

A Star From Jersey City Rises in the West

Lila Lee was not born on an oasis in the middle of the Sahara Desert on the back of a camel. Her father and mother were not wild, artistic persons, of Russian or Tartar extraction. Her education was not completed in a convent after she had been torn from the bosom of a pack of gypsies who sought to annex her.

And yet Lila, at the age of fourteen, is a star, a star without any of these starlike appendages, and for this Lila may be truly thankful. It makes living so simple. She may talk just plain American and never have to remember not to forget her accent. For Lila was born in Jersey City. And furthermore she is proud of it. She told us so herself, sitting in a perfectly modern chair in the well appointed drawing room of Mr. and Mrs. Gus Edwards.

Now, Lila happens to be endowed by nature with a face which suggests all sorts of wild notions in the mind of the beholder, and had the publicity director who holds her past and her future in his hands declared that she was the daughter of a French countess: who fell madly in love with a Sioux chief, or a beautiful Creole from Louisiana who married an East Indian prince, no one would have contradicted him. Because Lila looks as though she must have had romantic pre-natal influence.

She has perfectly straight jet black hair—yards and yards of it—and the largest, peculiar, gray-green eyes, with long, black eyelashes, and her skin is the color of ivory. Once upon a time, long ago, "The Duchess" was our favorite author, and as we read over our description of Miss Lee it seems to us that The Duchess once wrote something like it of one of her heroines. However, ours is true.

Although we knew for a certainty when we went to interview Lila that she was the original Cuddles, still we could not reconcile in our mind the memory which we carried of the young vaudeville star and the picture which we had seen of the same young person on the screen.

Perhaps the real Lila would prove to be a happy medium which would draw together the plump little pink-freckled, bare-kneed child whom we had seen on the stage two seasons ago and the slender, grown-up young lady who is appearing in Arcturaf pictures.

She was Cuddles then. Now she is Lila Lee, neither of which names is her own. However, by any other she would be as sweet, and she is sweet—just that.

Lila is a tall, slender young person who bears a faint resemblance to the Cuddles of two years ago and who looks very little older. She also bears a strong resemblance to the Lila of the screen, only she looks a little younger.

The screen Lila has lovers and gets married and everything just as a star should, but the real Lila is not quite fourteen and, while the plump knees are now covered, the dresses reach only a few inches below them. Yes, there is no doubt when you see Lila in real life that she is still a little girl.

"But you should see 'Georgie,'" said Lila, full of enthusiasm for her erstwhile partner prodigy. "He is a young man now—seventeen, and he is going to go with Ziegfeld on the Roof. But I like pictures better, oh, much better!"

Alas for the lack of fidelity in the female of the species. Since Cuddles had been three years old the stage had been her home and now, at the call of the camera, she ruthlessly renounces it and says that if she has her way she will remain in pictures forever.

Miss Lee has already finished four pictures. She showed us the stills of the last ones and said with a mixture

Releasing Our Copy According to Film Methods

My dear H. U.

Appreciating as I do your prowess in the cinematographic world, I come to you with a suggestion.

Why not hold up to ridicule some of the preliminary bunk that producers persist in peddling to audiences before actual motion pictures are finally placed upon the screen?

Do you really suppose that anybody outside the motion picture business cares two whoops who cranked the camera that photographed the film? Did you ever see an audience register anything but relief at the final termination of the elaborate preliminaries as to who directed the picture, who produced it, who wrote the captions and who conceived the idea of the final close-up?

Really, if movie fans actually like that stuff, why don't you make an effort to please them? Assuming that producers have the right idea, you ought to follow suit.

Why not dish up your stuff something like this:

Making the Screen Safe for Nonentities, or Why Audiences Go Home.

An Inquiry into the Raison d'Etre of Publicity for Everybody that had a Hand in Getting out a Film.

Text by Harriette Underhill.

Spelling of Polysyllabic Words Furnished by Fred Hawthorne.

Eraser borrowed from Ralph Block. Copy carried by Maud Picht, new office girl.

Copy read by Rebecca Drucker. Head suggested by Sarah Addington. Head approved by Heywood Brown. Carried to composing room by Herbert Feldman.

Head set up by Al Kistler. Linotype work by Louis Metacarpa. Proof read by Flanagan.

Page made up by Willie Manlove. Distributed by The Tribune Independent Delivery Service.

Yours truly,

GLENDON ALLVINE.

A. E. Smith, of the Vitaphone, Writing Propaganda Film

Arthur Collins has promised London the sixty-seventh annual Christmas pantomime at old Drury Lane Theatre, and Albert E. Smith, president of the Vitaphone Company of America, asserted yesterday that he will inaugurate a similar institution for New York City at a prominent theatre during the holidays, with the difference that the art of the motion picture will be called on to show the art of the pantomime to the children of America. Mr. Smith already has the scenario for his Christmas cinema extravaganza in preparation, as previously announced. It will involve his idea of eliminating any reference to Germanic ideas from the children's annual holiday. "One advantage over the Drury Lane spectacle which this will bring," said Mr. Smith, "is that the London one belongs to that city alone, while the New York Christmas feature will be released through Vitaphone exchanges simultaneously throughout the world. The Spirit of Liberty will take the place of Santa Claus."

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